



# MONTHLY NEWS LETTER OF THE THUNDER BAY ATARI ST ENTHUSIASTS

## GOOD TASTE

GOOD TASTE

VOLUME 2

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FEBRUARY 1988

### DISK OF THE MONTH

The February disk of the month features graphic demos, utilities, and a space invader type game.

Following is a list of programs that can be found on the February disk of the month:

Invaders\I.P.SCR - support file for stargames.prg  
STARGAMES.PRG - A multi level st invaders game from the Mid-City BBS which allows you to choose the skill level. Each level presents a new wave of invaders with various attack patterns. This version of Space Invaders isn't bad at all.

PICSW7\PICSW7.DOC - documentation for  
PICSW7.PRG  
PICSW7.PRG - This shareware program is fully gem based. It started off as an Amiga IFF file viewer, but has evolved from there. The basic intent of the program is to provide ST users with the ability to view as much artwork as possible, and to convert to a format that is usable to them on the ST.

Picswitch .07 will read the following picture formats:

Degas, Degas Elite compressed, Neochrome, tiny, Nvision, Amiga IFF, Macpaint, Mac startup screen, CIS vidtex hi-res RLE, Atari graphics 8 screen dump, Atari graphics 9 screen dump, Atari Koala\Microillustrator, Atari Micropainter.

Picswitch .07 will write the following picture formats:

Degas, Degas Elite compressed, Neochrome, Neochrome-page (for Nvision)

PMICON\ICON.DOC - documentation for ICON.PRG  
ICON.PRG - Allows you to transfer three graphic pictures from any of the print master graphic libraries to a Degas hi-res format.

TINYPICS.DEM - contains TINYVIEW.PRG and 9 tiny pics.

SPEAKTEX.TOS - computer says what you type.

This disk will be available at our February 29th meeting for \$4.00. We will also have a short demo of this disk at the above meeting.

Ed Giertuga.

### MEMBERSHIP REPORT

January's meeting was a good one in many respects, with Doug Stankie's great demos and with worthwhile discussions concerning use of club funds and the public domain library.

It was also a good meeting as far as club growth is concerned with 8 new members joining. At this time I would like to welcome the following new members:

Tom Roberts	Phil Moorey
James Dick	Douglas Orlowski
James Morris	Dianne Morris
Dave Baraniuk	Sandeep S. Brar

I hope you find membership in the club both an enjoyable and informative experience and I hope to see you all at the next meeting.

Ed Giertuga.

**NEXT MEETING - Monday February 29th**  
**Confederation College**  
**Aircraft Maintenance Hangar**  
**Thunder Bay Airport**

**SEE- Roy Stokes Adventure Corner**  
**and much more!**

## SECRETARY'S REPORT

### JAN 21st MEETING

In spite of the bitterly cold weather, the attendance at this the first meeting for 1988 was very heartening. A total of 22 STers were in attendance, with many new faces to be seen. With Treasurer Roy Stokes reporting that there was a healthy balance of more than \$400 to be utilised for the benefit of Club members, Neville suggested that this matter be discussed as the first item of the meeting. A very lively and constructive discussion followed; here is a summary.....

### PUBLIC DOMAIN LIBRARY

Bruce Hanford strongly suggested that a PD (Public Domain) library be set up. Several such sources were available, including collections of members themselves. Len Stokes (no relation to Roy) of the Winnipeg ST Users Group, has agreed to make PD disks available to the TASTE library for a reasonable fee.

I have condensed the original Winnipeg listings (which took up nearly 500k) into a 16-page, 112k listing. This has been a very time-consuming task, and I am hoping that members will make use of the listing. This compilation would be mailed out with February's newsletter to members.

It was suggested that the names of PD software sources be made available to members. This is being initiated (ref. item following).

Members were requested to furnish lists of what they had acquired. Arrangements would be made to suitably compensate them. Phil Moorey provided Neville with a list of programs available through a Ham operator's network. This list would be available at the February meeting, together with any other lists supplied by members.

- The PD collection provided by Mikadon Inc., Thunder Bay, is being cataloged, and a list would be made available.
- final details as to how the PD library should operate would be worked out at the next meeting.
- Neville has agreed to look after the PD library for the time being.

### UTILISATION OF FUNDS

Tom Roberts suggested that subscriptions to Newsletters from other user groups be considered. As a starting point, the Winnipeg ST Users Group can be considered, in appreciation of their offer to sell us disks from their PD library at a nominal rate.

After a brief discussion on buying blank disks, George Kamstra moved that the Club buys 10 boxes of disks; the motion was seconded by Tom Roberts. Ed would look after ordering the disks and expects them to be available to members at the next meeting. The price to members would be \$17 for 10.

### PROGRAM DEMOS

Doug Starkie probably missed his true vocation. Judging from the way he expertly operated FLIGHT SIMULATOR, he should have been a pilot. His navigation was excellent, with no near-misses or anything dangerous to report. He also showed members some of the strong points of FAST BASIC. Even though you appeared to be a bit disappointed in the response to

this demonstration, Doug, be assured that all of us got a great deal out of this exposure to a very powerful ST language. Thanks very much for the trouble.

### DISK-OF-THE-MONTH

Ed did a good job demonstrating the main features of the programs on the disk. Eight members lined up at the end of the meeting to buy their disks. At \$4 for a disk, I hope you agree that this is good value for your money.

### NEW MEMBERS

8 new members joined TASTE, and a very warm welcome is extended to each of you. Details can be found in the report by the Membership Secretary - Ed Gieruga.

The meeting adjourned at 9.30 pm. Thank you all for coming, and we are looking forward to seeing you in February ..... Neville

### MEMORY EXPANSION FOR THE 520ST A FIRST HAND ACCOUNT

by N.Denetto

The long-awaited memory board arrived at last from E.Arthur Brown Company. I hasten to add that although there was no delay at their end, it took a little over a month to reach Thunder Bay.

The well-constructed board itself measures approximately 6.5" by 2", and sports a few trailing umbilical cords. Sixteen 256k chips are snugly installed in their sockets (as opposed to being soldered on directly to the board) to give you an additional 512k of RAM. A bank of 16 empty sockets stares invitingly at you for inserting additional memory chips which can give you either 2.5 meg or 4 meg of RAM.

Installing the board, after you have got over an initial nervous feeling, is comparatively simple

- a. remove one existing MMU and install it on the socket provided on the adapter
- b. install the two piggy-back connectors on the data buffer chips
- c. plug the board into the now-vacant MMU socket on the main board.
- d. firmly press everything down for good measure, and you are away and running.
- e. Test the system using the programs that are on the disk that accompanies the expansion kit.

The whole procedure took under 2 hours, with some moral, technical, and other support from my Tandy/IBM 'rival', Peter. I suppose that my background in electronics helped.

The instruction manual that comes with the board is well-written and fully supported by photographs and sketches. The only 'defect', if you choose to call it that, is the piggyback feature of the connectors that hook up to the databuffer chips. But when the alternative, soldering 16 pins etc, is considered, I am convinced that the E.Arthur Brown alternative is superior.

The disk that comes with the kit has two test programs, and a very useful spooler/ram-disk program. Everything tested out fine. Now I can run a dictionary, a ram disk, several accessories. Good heavens! what's this on the screen 'OUT OF MEMORY'? No, it cannot be... well let's fill up those empty sockets. (Don't take me



too seriously here!).

I strongly recommend this particular expansion module for anyone contemplating an upgrade. The instructions are excellent, product support is very good. You really do not need any knowledge of computers and electronics to do the job.

The product (costing \$199.95 US) is available from:

E. Arthur Brown Company

3404 Pawnee Drive, Alexandria, MN 56308

612/762/8847, 612/763-6393

It cost me \$300 Canadian. If you need any further information or help, please do not hesitate to contact me at 577-1061(evenings).

### WHY EXPAND?

It is a well-recorded fact that computer enthusiasts have an insatiable appetite for two things - memory, and speed. My decision to go for an additional 512k was based on the following:

- I could not use the dictionary and thesaurus features of some popular wordprocessors. Keeping in mind that the main use for my computer is word processing, this use alone would justify the additional memory.
- it was impossible to use the many accessories that I can now use like Crystal, Notepads, Directory assistance etc.
- many of the newer, high-power programs require a minimum of 1meg to run satisfactorily.
- I would lose too much money if I traded my 520ST for a 1040. Also, response to the above idea from the local dealer was lukewarm.
- I was somewhat sloppy when doing my shopping around. Additional probing on my part would have revealed that buying a 1040 was the right way to go.
- many operations run much faster now. For example, screen scrolling and cursor movement was very sluggish with Word Perfect. This is not the case anymore.
- some commercial programs (for example Bard's Tale) run much faster with the character and scenery files located in a ram disk.
- disk drive wear is considerably reduced.

A few other factors like future expansion, etc etc influenced my decision. I consider the money well spent.

### ST UPDATE

by N.Denetto

The following is an extract from the February issue of Computer Shopper, and covers various items that could be of interest to the ST user.

- \* an Atari ST section will appear each month in this magazine.
- \* CD ROM: this unit will be priced at under \$600(US). It will hold up to 540 meg per disk (over 1000 floppies), will play audio CD's, will play up to an hour of Video.
- \* ABAQ: a 10-MIP(million instructions per second) Unix-like graphics workstation for under \$5000.
- \* IBM EMULATOR BOX: if released by Atari, it will likely be faster than a normal clone and perhaps more versatile than the PC-Ditto package.
- \* MODEMS: the Atari SX-212, a 300/1200 baud Hayes compatible unit, seen for under \$90.
- \* MIDI: ...since it is the only computer that offers such an item built in...and at that price, the ST has become the #1 computer

of choice for musicians. Germany's Tangerine Dream group..uses six 040ST's to control their dozen or so synthesizers and samplers...many music stores now carry computer software and, yes, Atari ST computers!...who needs to dig between toys to buy Atari computers anymore - just look between the guitars and the drums.

\* **MAC EMULATOR:** David Small's Magic-Sac and Disk Drive Adapter makes the ST more compatible with Macintosh software than even the MacII. Version 4.5 has automatic Crash Prevention, recovering from even software bugs before you can crash, hard drive support...and allows Epson printer and Apple LaserWrite support..The new drive adapter plugs into the drive loop...and is able to read and write in Mac format. Very nice, as copy protected Mac software can now join the list of Sac-compatible software. Projected price: \$225(US), available any time now. Data Pacific, 303/733-8158.

\* **PC DITTO:** .. doesn't like some DOS's (Zenith, PC's Limited, Blue Chip, Hitachi). Formatting a virgin disk in IBM form also generates an error....[I have extensively tried out PFS:First choice ( an integrated word processor, database, and spread sheet) loaned to me by an IBM acquaintance. Sure it's a bit slow, but works well..Neville]

\* **GAMES:** Mindscape will publish versions of PaperBoy, Gauntlet, Road Runner and others.

\* **PIRACY:** Piracy of commercial programs is such a problem in the low end computers (Atari, Commodore) that many software companies just gave up. Another move is to get tough. Michtron has offered a bounty for "pirate BBS's"...turn in a BBS with Michtron programs on it, and Michtron will give you \$200, or \$400 of Michtron Software. Turn in three numbers, and Michtron will give you a hard drive.

### HINTS and TIPS

compiled by N.Denetto

#### Autobooting Programs.

Have you ever wished that a certain program - perhaps a ram disk utility, or an application, or a language - could run automatically when you start up your ST? This feature would be especially handy if you need to set up a disk for someone who wants to run a program without understanding anything more than how to turn on the computer.

As part of the initialising sequence, the ST looks for a folder called AUTO on the boot disk. Any files with a .PRG extension found in the AUTO folder are executed in sequence. These files are known as COMMAND.PRG files.

It's very easy to set up an autoboot program. Place your boot disk in your drive, then point to the 'File' heading on the menu bar. Select the 'New Folder' option and create a folder named AUTO.

Move any program you want to autoboot into this folder. Any time you boot your ST from this disk, the program you placed in the AUTO folder will automatically run.

- ref. 'ST Hints and Tips', George Miller, Asst. Tech. Editor, Computel (June 1986, pp82/83)

### SUPPORT TASTE BY

COMING TO THE MEETINGS.....AND .....

CONTRIBUTING TO THE NEWSLETTER

## THE ADVENTURE CORNER

You are in for a treat. This month I will outline to you a program which I believe is one of the most outstanding programs of its sort on the market today - if not 'THE' most outstanding program.

BEYOND ZORK - offered by Infocom - ST 512 OR 1040 Color or Mono - Data disk required

Infocom is famous for 'all text' adventure games. Their reputation is unquestioned by all who play this type of game. One would have to ask how they could possibly improve upon their format without sacrificing something? Well they have. Nothing has been left out and much has been added. In addition to the usual commands the following have been added:

- COLOR - change colors on screen
- DEFINE - change function key settings to suit you
- MODE - change between 'windows' and standard text
- MONITOR - turn character 'endurance' monitoring on or off
- NAME - give your own name(s) to anything you find
- NOTIFY - as your character changes during game play, the program will let you know of this change - you can turn this on or off
- \* OOPS - allows you to correct only the word mistyped instead of having to retype all
- PRIORITY - define your own windows
- \* UNDO - IF YOU DO SOMETHING WHICH PUTS YOUR CHARACTER IN TROUBLE, JUST 'BACK UP'
- \*\* ZOOM - YES, THIS PROGRAM DRAWS THE MAP FOR YOU AS YOU ENTER EACH LOCATION. ZOOM ALLOWS YOU TO VIEW SMALL OR LARGE SECTIONS OF THE MAP

Unlike previous games by Infocom this allows you to create your own character (or use those on disk) and as the game progresses your character characteristics change. Puzzles are as usual very good. You will come in contact with many other characters during play - some help you, some must be killed.

The documentation is excellent and is full of hints to help you deal with most of the "monsters" you will encounter.

I love this game, and have completed about 1/4 of it. Words on this page just cannot do justice to it. You must see it in action.

If you are interested in seeing it, give me a call (344-3924) and we can make some arrangement.

HINT - USE THE SEACHEST TO GET RID OF THE MONKEY GRINDER.

\* BEYOND ZORK takes you to the troubled Kingdom of Quendor, across the sea from the Great Underground Empire. In Quendor the wizards have mysteriously

disappeared, and vicious monsters haunt the streets and wastelands. Fate has directed that you, a lowly peasant, must unravel the meaning behind these ominous events. Luckily, you have an arsenal of new weapons and abilities at your disposal."

INFOCOM - Interaction Fiction Product Catalog

## SWAP SHOP

Would you like to re-cycle your software? Why not take advantage of this opportunity? All you have to do is contact ROY STOKES at 344-3924 after 4:30- most days- and he will publish your wishes in our news letter each month.

Once the word gets around, you can then make your own deal.

Please remember that copyright laws are in effect, therefore only original software with all documentation can be so traded.

### THIS MONTH WE HAVE:

PROGRAM	CONTACT	COST/SWAP
KING'S QUEST II	ROY STOKES(344-3924)	\$35.00 or SWAP
KING'S QUEST III	ROY STOKES(344-3924)	\$35.00 or SWAP
S.D.I.	ROY STOKES(344-3924)	\$35.00 or SWAP
STARGLIDER	ROY STOKES(344-3924)	\$35.00 or SWAP
MOONMIST	ROY STOKES(344-3924)	\$35.00 or SWAP

\*\* JOIN THE CROWD AND LET US FEED YOUR COMPUTER \*\*

GOOD TASTE is published monthly by T.A.S.T.E-The Thunder Bay Atari St Enthusiasts. Issues are mailed to all members in good standing.

Memberships are \$25.00 per year, \$15.00 for Students. Back issues of GOOD TASTE can be obtained for \$1.00 per issue.

Opinions expressed in this publication are those of the individual authors and do not necessarily represent or reflect the opinions of GOOD TASTE, or our user group which is not affiliated in any way with Atari.

In this issue we've once again used PUBLISHING PARTNER. The cover title and most of the headlines are in the hudson font. The bulk of the remaining text is Helvetica font at 10 points.

Contributing articles for this issue were Neville Denetto, Roy Stokes and Ed Giertuga. Layout by Neville Denetto and Ed Giertuga.

Editor-Ed Giertuga